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The changing landscape of palliative care research in Ireland from 2002 to 2017: A comparison of two systematic reviews within a global context

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2013 Review



2018 Review



Background

A lack of global information pertaining to palliative care research capacity has led to individual countries seeking to assess their own state of play.

Aim: To examine how palliative care research in Ireland has changed within an international context.

Methods

Comparison of two systematic reviews (2012; 2017) conducted in Ireland to identify the impact of additional investment in palliative care research. A further comparison was undertaken against systematic reviews from Scotland, Sweden, and south Asia to map palliative care research capacity in Ireland globally.

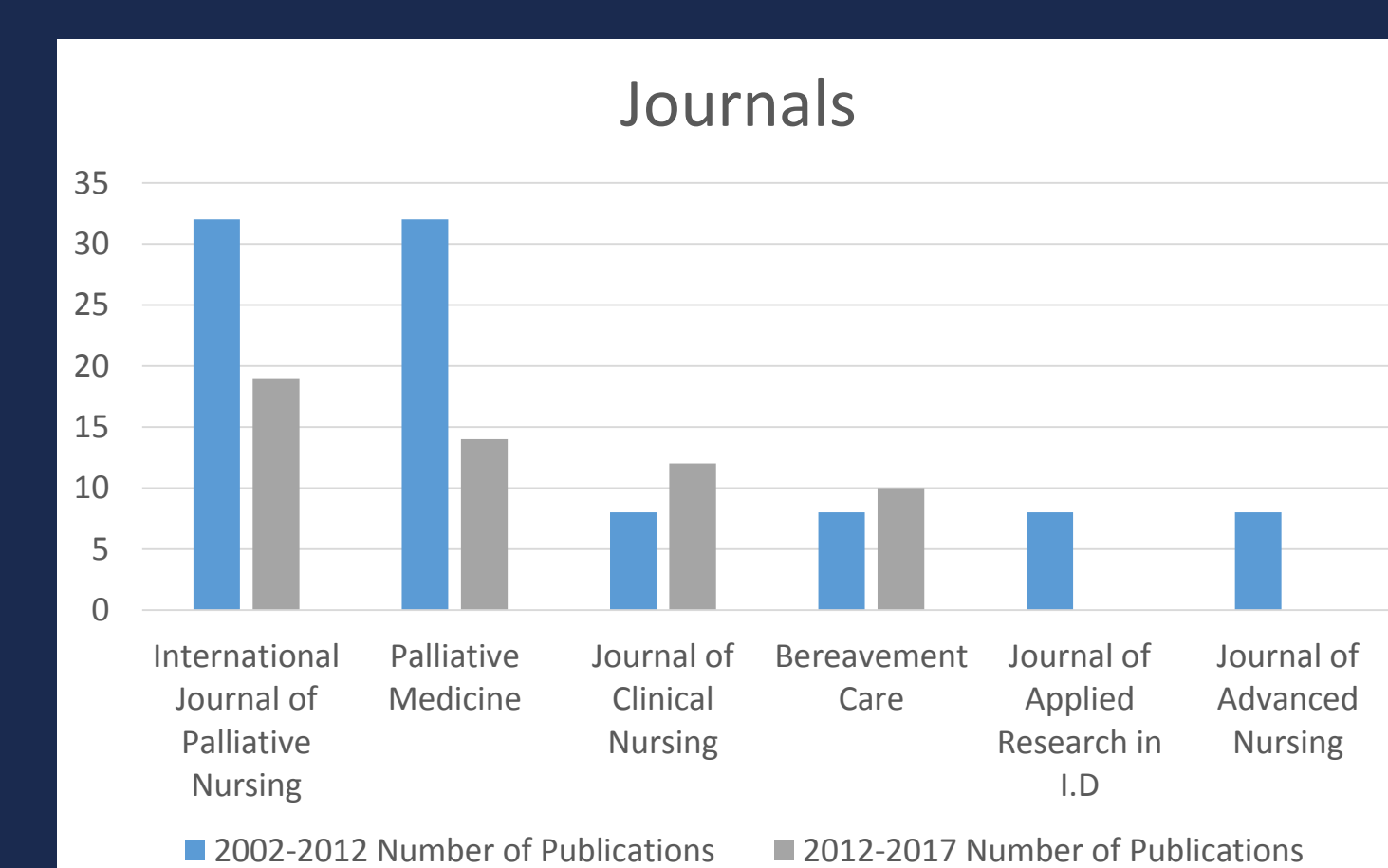
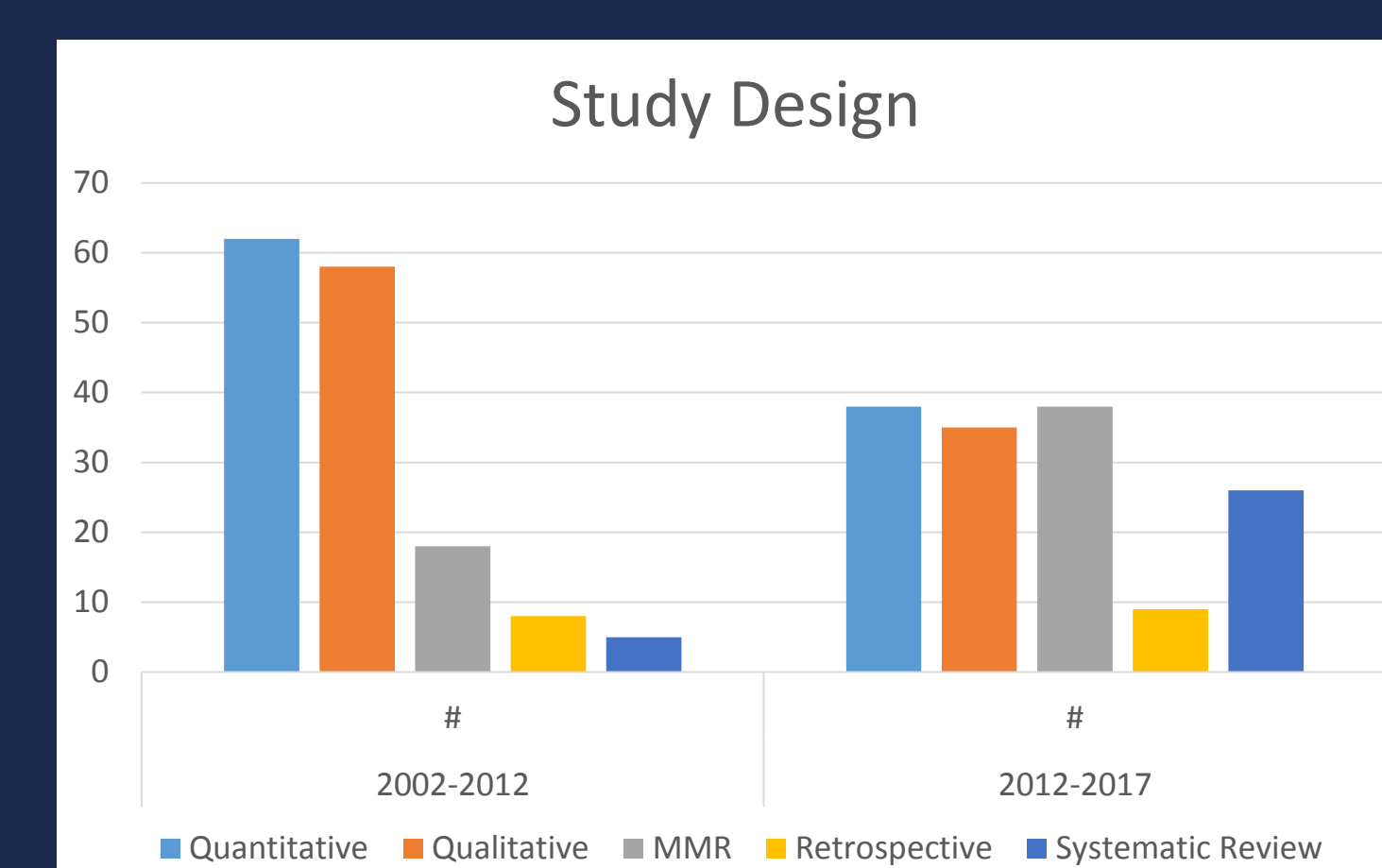
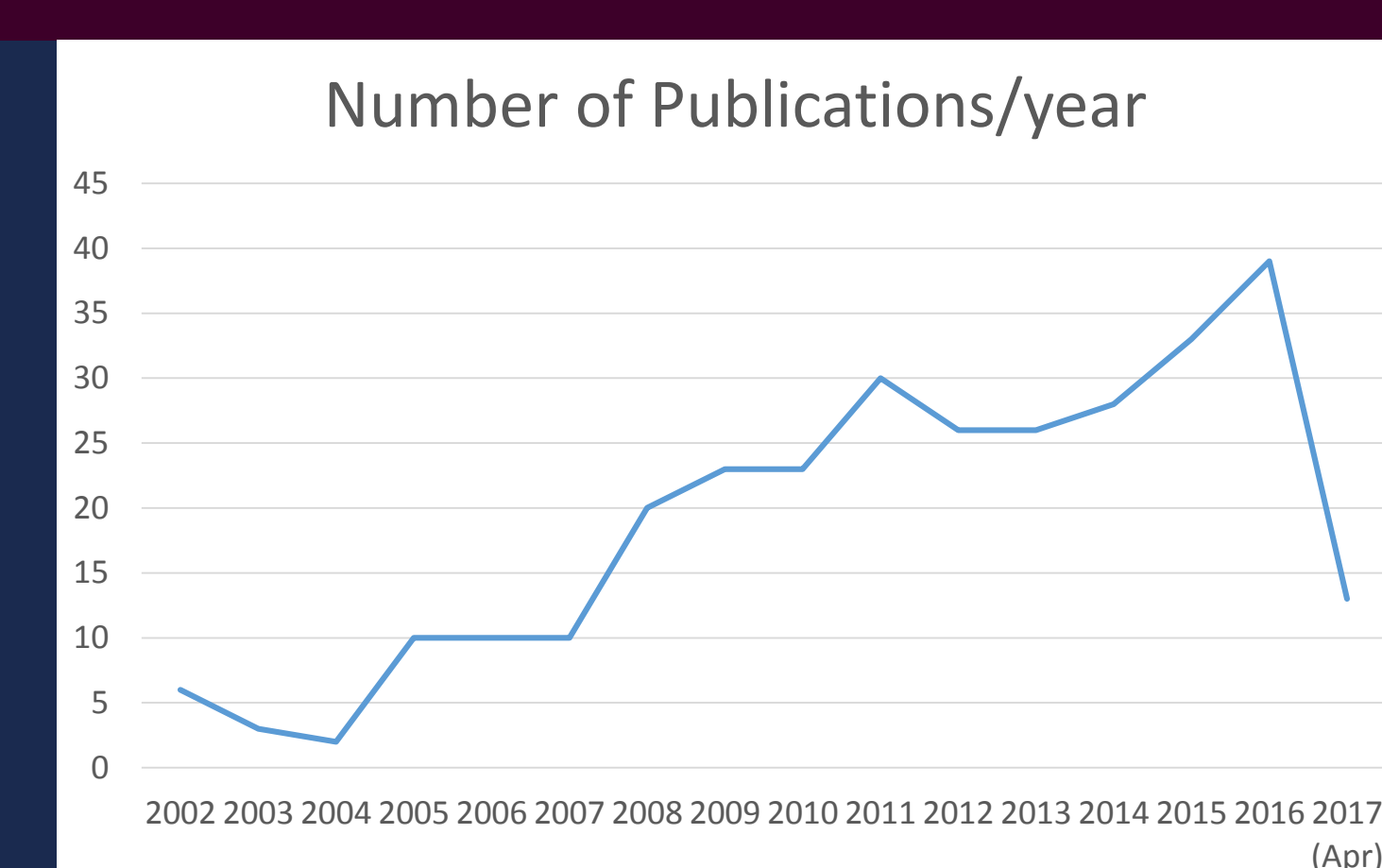
Results

Research outputs doubled in Ireland from 2012 (n=151 in 10 years) to 2017 (n=151 in five years), many were experiential and needs based, in line with Scotland, Sweden, and south Asia.

Only one trial was noted in Ireland per review, compared to 11 in Scotland, ten in Sweden, and four in south Asia. Systematic reviews increased in popularity from 3% (2012) to 17% (2017).

Collaborative working is evident (66% showed national or international collaboration in Ireland) despite a large percentage of unfunded research across all reviews.

Research gaps include out of hours' care, psychological symptom control, and over reliance on healthcare professionals' perspectives.



Gaps

Out of hours care

Psychological symptom control

Patient and family perspectives

Conclusions

Whilst overall palliative care research has increased, further progress is required.

Key areas for more research are continuity of care and non-physical symptom control.

Research should include patients and family perspectives, and use trial methodology.

Additional funding for large scale, international collaborative projects would substantially advance the palliative care research field.